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*Research Article*

# “SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS ON LAWYERS WHO ARE WORKING WITH MIGRANTS”

Yağmur Melis SÖZER\*, Şebnem AKİPEK ÖCAL\*\*

**Abstract**

*This study investigates the level of secondary traumatic stress experienced by lawyers working in the field of immigration. Lawyers take an active role both in one-on-one meetings with individuals, in the work and transactions of irregular migrants, and in many different units of the state and international institutions and organizations. People working in the field of humanitarian aid have quite a lot of secondary traumatic stress experiences. For this reason, it is important to measure the secondary traumatic stress levels of the professionals working in the field of human rights in terms of the sustainability of their duties. Many different factors affect secondary traumatic stress such as professional experience, gender, age are important factors in determining the level of secondary traumatic stress that lawyers are exposed to. The aim of this study is to explain the relationship between the secondary traumatic levels experienced by lawyers working with migrants and, their demographic variables. This study will contribute to the development of more efficient and effective work programs for professionals working in the field by revealing the importance of the secondary traumatic stress level experienced by lawyers working on the implementation of human rights.*

**Keywords:** Secondary Traumatic Stress, Migration, Law, Psychology

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# “GÖÇMENLER İLE ÇALIŞAN HUKUKÇULARDAKİ İKİNCİL TRAVMATİK STRES”

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## Öz

*Bu çalışma, göç alanında çalışan hukukçuların yaşadıkları ikincil travmatik stres düzeyini araştırmaktadır. Göç olgusu tüm dünyada her geçen gün artan ve bütün ülkeleri yakından ilgilendiren insan hakları bağlamında bir konudur. İnsan hakları alanında sahada çalışan birçok farklı meslek mensubu bulunmaktadır. Hukukçular gerek kişiler ile birebir görüşmelerde, gerek düzensiz göçmenlerin iş ve işlemlerinde, gerekse devletin ve uluslararası kurum-kuruluşların birçok farklı birimlerinde aktif bir şekilde rol almaktadır. İnsani yardım alanında çalışan kişilerin, ikincil travmatik stres deneyimleri oldukça fazladır. Bu nedenle, insan hakları alanında çalışan meslek elemanlarının görevlerinin sürdürebilirliği açısından ikincil travmatik stres düzeylerinin ölçülmesi önem arz etmektedir. İkincil travmatik stresi etkileyen birçok farklı faktör bulunmaktadır. Meslekte deneyim süresi, cinsiyet, yaş gibi faktörler hukukçuların maruz kaldığı ikincil travmatik stres düzeyini belirlemede önemli faktörlerdendir. Bu çalışmanın amacı; farklı kurum ve kuruluşlarda göçmenler ile çalışan hukukçuların yaşadıkları ikincil travmatik düzeylerinin demografik değişkenler ile ilişkisini açıklamak ve sonrasında literatüre katkı sağlayacak bir şekilde alınabilecek önlemlerden ve/veya ortaya koyulabilecek uygulamalardan bahsetmektir. Bu çalışma, insan haklarının uygulanması konusunda çalışan hukukçuların yaşadıkları ikincil travmatik stres düzeyinin önemini ortaya koyarak, sahada çalışan meslek mensupları için daha verimli ve etkili çalışma programlarının oluşturulmasına katkı sağlayacaktır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İkincil Travmatik Stres, Göç, Hukuk, Psikoloji

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### **1.1. Research Question and Conceptualizing**

In this study titled “Secondary Traumatic Stress on Lawyers Who are Working with Migrants” the secondary traumatic stress levels of lawyers working with migrants are examined based on different sub-dimensions. Asylum seekers and migrants are exposed to factors such as deaths, injuries and physical difficulties (fatigue, hunger, insomnia) during their migration movement process. The traumatic processes of such events not only affect migrants but also affect professionals who are working in this field. Although they have not experienced the events personally, professionals working in this field can be negatively affected by the stories and experiences told by migrants. While some employees are affected much more negatively by traumas, some individuals can cope more easily with the traumatic processes they experience. Demographic information such as the person’s age, gender, and duration of work experience in the field can change the secondary traumatic stress levels they experience.

There are many different professionals working in the field of migration. In the field of humanitarian aid, the administrative parts of different projects, the workload of lawyers is also quite high. When the workload, duties and responsibilities of lawyers are taken into consideration, it is necessary to investigate the secondary traumatic stress levels experienced by lawyers. According to the results of the literature review, it has been observed that the studies on lawyers are limited in the studies conducted in this field. The problem of this study is that while examining the relationship between the secondary traumatic stress levels experienced by lawyers working with asylum seekers and immigrants with demographic variables, it is also revealed that they need psychosocial support services to identify possible solutions. It is thought that the current research will contribute to the literature, since the studies are insufficient and the lawyers working in the field need different support.

### **1.2. The importance of research**

The usual reactions of people with whom they have a helping relationship in the field of migration to their extraordinary lives are included as secondary traumatic stress in the relevant literature, since they are not directly

confronted with the traumatic event (Bride, 2007). In the literature, secondary traumatic stress levels of professional such as emergency service workers, psychologists, psychological counselors, social workers and search and rescue volunteers who go to the field for psychosocial intervention after a social trauma are a highly studied issue. Considering that lawyers working in the field of humanitarian aid in different units and projects, it is necessary to conduct such a research since people working in the field of humanitarian aid are constantly exposed to trauma. It is thought that this research will raise awareness about the secondary traumatization experienced by lawyers working in the field of humanitarian aid. This research is also expected to provide scientific data on the existing literature and future projects and studies on secondary trauma experienced by lawyers.

Specifically, the results of this research will provide a resource for public institutions working in the field of humanitarian aid, national and international non-governmental organizations. In order to understand the situation of lawyers and to develop services for them, outcomes of this study will be very crucial for the field. When the national structures are considered, it is thought that it will provide a scientific contribution to the literature on the formation of social and state policies as well. In this study, the levels of secondary traumatic stress in lawyers working with immigrants are discussed. The theoretical framework related to the subject and the findings of the related researches are presented and the importance of secondary traumatization, which can affect the professionals in question, has been tried to be emphasized by giving information about the precautions that can be taken.

## **2.1 Concept of Migration**

The emergence of the issue of immigration, which has existed since ancient times, as an international problem coincides with the beginning of the 20th century. Millions of people lost their lives due to the World Wars and the number of people who had to migrate with the effect of these wars was as high (Savar & Kedikli, 2019). This situation increasingly continued in the period between the two wars and during the cold war as well. Today, intense immigration movements continue to be experienced in countries due to reasons such as internal turmoil, ethnic, and religious pressures,

political instability, natural disasters and economic problems (Savar & Keddikli, 2019). Millions of people around the world are affected by events such as conflict, natural disasters, persecution, violence, or human rights violations. These events cause people to move away from their homeland and seek refuge in other countries (Çakran & Eren, 2017). The concept of migration, which is expressed as the displacement event of people settling from one settlement to another to spend their new lives, is dynamic and variable (Ziya, 2012).

Migration concept is directly linked with international refugee law within global concept. It has become an issue of close concern to all states in the recent period, when armed conflicts, both international and non-international, have increased. It is a legal obligation to protect individuals who have to leave their country due to various pressures and who also face human rights violations in their country of asylum at both national and international levels. According to United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), at the end of 2019, 79.5 million forcibly displaced people have lived all over the world (UNHCR, 2020). In addition to that, there have been 26 million refugees and 4.2 million asylum-seekers as well (UNHCR, 2020). The reasons for migration have both social, economic, humanitarian and environmental dimensions (Çakran & Eren, 2017). The first regulation about refugees is the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees. This Convention was deemed inadequate in terms of its content, and later the definition and position of refugees were rearranged with the 1967 Protocol on the Legal Status of Refugees (Bozbeyoğlu, 2015).

**According to this Protocol, refugee is;**

who is outside the country of his or her nationality and does not want to benefit from the protection of that country because he or she fears rightly that he or she will be persecuted because of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political ideas; or any person who has no nationality and who is outside his or her country of residence as a result of such events, cannot return there or does not want to return because of the fear (Bozbeyoğlu, 2015).

The term refugee or migrant is generally misused, especially by the media, on an equal basis with the concepts of asylum seeker and immigrant (Çakran & Eren, 2017). The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines people who move away from their place of origin as immigrants, regardless of factors such as the legal status of the person, the voluntary or involuntary occurrence of the movement, the reasons for the movement or the duration of stay in the destination as migrant (IOM, 2011). The concepts of refugees and asylum seekers include leaving their country as a necessity. The quality that distinguishes these two concepts from each other is related to the fact that the asylum situation is a temporary status (Korkut, 2010).

## **2.2. Asylum Seekers and Refugees in International Legislation**

Although the phenomenon of asylum has been on the agenda since ancient times, it was defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948. With the phrase “Everyone has the right to seek and benefit from the opportunity of asylum in other countries in the face of persecution”, the “right to asylum” is defined as a right in a positive sense (UDHR Art. 14/1). In terms of legislation on Asylum Law, the Convention on the International Status of Refugees dated 1933 can be named as the first comprehensive international document since it also pioneered the 1951 Convention. This treaty, which was signed by a small number of countries and faced many reservations, remained narrow in terms of its scope during the period it was accepted (Korkut, 2010). As a result of the increasing refugee movements, more comprehensive and universal legal regulations regarding the protection of asylum seekers were made after the Second World War. The universal legal regulation made in this period and still valid is the Geneva Convention on the Legal Situation of Refugees signed in 1951. Before the 1951 Convention, regulations regarding the asylum law were made in 1926, 1928, 1933 and 1938. However, the 1951 Convention is a regulation that includes all these regulations and differs from other conventions due to its universality (Kahya, 2014).

The 1951 Geneva Convention, signed by the governments of the parties on 28 July 1951, has been in force since 22 April 1954. With this special agreement, the definitions related to the law of asylum and the in-

ternational definition of the concept of refugee in particular, as well as the rights related to asylum and the obligations of the states that are party to the Convention are regulated in detail (Kaya & Eren, 2015). The 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol form the cornerstone of the modern refugee protection system, and the legal principles it contains have also influenced numerous international, regional and national laws and practices that set rules on how refugees should be treated. 141 states are party to the 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol as of September 2001. Some of the contracting countries still reserve the geographical restriction. Turkey is also among these countries.

### **2.3. International Protection & Refugee Status Determination and other Legal Regulations in Turkey**

Global migration movements that took place in the last century and are increasing today have caused important legal and social problems. Situations such as political instability, civil war and occupation in recent periods have increased the asylum-seekers and refugee problem (Çallı, 2016). In addition to these developments in Turkey in the area of migration and asylum, there have been important developments in the world as well. The 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol are also considered as the most fundamental international legal documents in terms of Turkish law. Having accepted the 1951 Convention by ratifying it in the Turkish Grand National Assembly with the Law No. 359 on 29 August 1961, Turkey, in terms of the obligations brought by the Convention, has replaced the phrase “events occurring before January 1, 1951” in paragraph (b) of the Convention. In other words, while accepting the Convention, Turkey has restricted the definition of refugee in terms of place and date by using the right of choice stipulated in Article 1. However, Turkey ended the date limitation in the 1967 Protocol signed later. Taking advantage of the “reservations and feelings” provision in Article 7 of the Protocol, it stated that it continues to accept the geographical restriction.

Experienced war and political instability in neighboring countries have led to intensive migration towards Turkey. Over time, Turkey has become the source and destination countries (Savar & Kedikli, 2019) which has been exposed to immigration as a destination or transit coun-



try throughout history due to its geographical location, is one of the first parties to the 1951 Convention, which was adopted by the United Nations (UN) in Geneva in 1951, which is the most important international document regarding the right of asylum and refugees. It was approved by the Turkish Grand National Assembly with the Law No. 359 on 29 August 1961. With the decision of the Council of Ministers dated 1 July 1968, it joined the 1967 Protocol.

As the law specifies the rights and responsibilities of foreigners that are living in Turkey, Foreigners and International Protection Law Draft with 6458 No. and published in the Official Newspapers, has entered then into force one year after publication. In addition to that, Turkey, establishing the Directorate General of Migration Management (Now, Presidency of Migration Management) in order to collect all the work involved in migration and asylum issues under one roof. There are different types of protection and temporary protection under international protection in Turkish legal system. In the section with the title of international protection, the procedures of the international protection application are explained, the evaluation criteria of international protection applications, the interview and decision stages and the stages of objection to the decisions are arranged in detail, the issues related to administrative detention and the rights and obligations of the applicants are included. In addition, the provision of a regulation to be issued by the President of the Republic for the definition of temporary protection and the determination of the work and transactions to be carried out regarding the persons to be provided with temporary protection has been included. The special statuses of foreigners who are under international protection or benefit from international protection and foreigners who benefit from temporary protection may contain different arrangements in terms of the rights granted to those with other statuses.

### **3.1. What is humanitarian aid?**

The main objective of humanitarian action are to protect lives and reduce suffering and sustain human dignity during and after man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as prevent and increase readiness for such events. Protection of civilians and those no longer involved in hostilities, as well

as the provision of food, water and sanitation, shelter, health services, and other forms of assistance, are all examples of humanitarian action taken for the benefit of those affected and to help them return to their normal lives and livelihoods (Relief, 2003). Humanitarian action should be guided by humanitarian principles of humanity, which emphasize the importance of saving human lives and alleviating suffering wherever it occurs; impartiality, which entails implementing actions solely on the basis of need, with no discrimination between or within affected populations.

Humanitarian aid has poured to refugees through international organisations since World War II, with the goal of feeding, sheltering, and providing legal protection from deportation or persecution to persons escaping conflict (Barber, 2014). Humanitarian aid is commonly used to describe refugee crises. Because of the painful experience of political violence and persecution, men, women, and children are compelled to flee their homes and livelihoods (Salehyan, 2009). While the humanitarian aspects of refugee flight are critical, a rising number of academics are emphasizing the security implications of forced migration (Salehyan, 2009). Migrants are, without a doubt, the victims of violent crime. Nonetheless, they have the potential to transfer conflict and instability to their host countries, particularly if the hosts are unwilling or unable to manage security externalities (Choi & Salehyan, 2013). Due to humanitarian and security concerns, forced migration has a substantial impact on states, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (Lischer, 2005).

### **3.2. The Importance of Law, Lawyers and and Legal Assistance in Humanitarian Aid**

Legal aid is an important component of access to justice and the right to an effective remedy, particularly in situations where information is few and other types of support and community ties are shaky (UNICEF, 2020). Legal assistance is a broad category of services that can assist asylum seekers, migrants, and refugees in navigating the legal system in order to obtain refugee status and to protect their civil, economic, social, and cultural rights. It begins with the dissemination of legal knowledge, legal processes, and services, and progresses through legal counseling, legal represen-

tation, and advocacy (Oxfam, 2018). There was common assent among respondents that within the confront of the disintegration of outcast law and refusal of get to to the refuge prepare, arrangement of lawful help and combined advocacy on refuge are the foremost fitting mediations to challenge arrangements and hones (Oxfam, 2018) Displaced people and asylum-seekers ought to too have the proper to advise in court procedures on the same premise as nationals. Legitimate help alludes to giving lawful exhortation and counseling by a attorney to a recipient concerning the particular legitimate circumstances and follow-up of legitimate strategies with official specialists (UNHCR, 2019).

### **3.3. The Role of Lawyers in Humanitarian Aid**

Working in compassionate law is to be in a particular and prestigious range of the legitimate calling. Helpful legal counselors work on cases of universal helpful law, counting war wrongdoings, genocide, and human rights manhandle. Experiences with enduring expend advocates' day by day lives look for to bridge lawful and approach systems with the encounters of those who have been avoided (Cabot, 2016). Attorneys (or prepared non-lawyer) can give fundamental help by making a difference the asylum-seeker tell their possess story and make beyond any doubt the realities are known to the decision-maker. On the off chance that the decision-maker rejects the asylum-seeker, at that point the center ought to move on offer to decision-maker blunders. In this case, a lawyer's investigate, expository and enticing abilities will be premium (Kagan, 2006).

Refugee law, which is one of the elements of international law, dates back to the earliest times of human history. People starting to live together; it has brought concepts such as oppression and violence. The existence of these concepts in social life necessitated the regulation of the problem of displacement of the masses exposed to them in the international arena (Ergüven & Özturanlı, 2013). The institutions and organizations that emerged as a result of the studies on the subject form the basis of today's refugee law. When the field of migration and humanitarian aid is mentioned, most people think of social services, psychology and emergency aid workers (such as law enforcement). However, considering that immi-

grants are a disadvantaged group, many situations such as access to a lawyer, the right to receive legal assistance, and the protection of vulnerable immigrants are ignored both in institutions and organizations working in the field of migration and in operational works in the field. The legal aid project carried out by the Union of Turkish Bar Associations in cooperation with the UNHCR continues to provide free legal aid to asylum seekers at all stages of the international protection procedure, in custody, as well as in civil matters and women's rights (UNHCR, 2020).

Although immigration law is important in international legislation, the boundaries of professional responsibilities and powers of lawyers working in the field of immigration in Turkey are newly drawn. There are many different reasons behind this. The main reason why the legal field has not yet gained full competence on the phenomenon of migration may be that the planning of irregular migration and regular migration flows in our country is delayed. International refugee law is of particular interest to all states, especially Turkey, which is both a transit country and a destination country in terms of population movements, in the recent period when international and non-international armed conflicts have increased (Ergüven & Özturanlı, 2013).

The legal status of immigrants in our country, their access to rights and services are also guaranteed by international law and Turkish law. For this reason, in the preparation of Law No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection, in which the powers and responsibilities of lawyers in the field of migration are underlined, references were made to the Attorneyship Law, Legal Aid Regulation and related provisions, and therefore the functioning of Bar Associations in Turkey was also highlighted has gained importance. However, for the first time in Turkey's history, some of the administrative and judicial review mechanisms of this field, whose new implementation has been started with a law, have not only remained on paper, but have been enabled to be effectively audited through Bar Associations. As a result of all this, the involvement of lawyers in the immigration system has become more tangible, and lawyers have taken a much more active role in the field of immigration than before.

There is also a need for a communication and information network between bar associations and lawyers about the cases they have opened and the decisions that have been made. In the field of immigration, lawyers mostly work with immigrants during the asylum process, which we can also call international protection, and the application process for this protection. International protection is when people seek international protection from that state by taking refuge in another state, instead of the protection they cannot or do not want to receive from their own state due to persecution or serious harm. Although forced migration mobility has existed from ancient times to the present, the efforts to draw the framework of asylum in international law and to provide protection to these people seeking international protection are relatively new. There is a need for regulations in this area in the international community. Due to this situation, arrangements for asylum have been initiated under the leadership of international organizations. In our country, lawyers not only individually in bar associations, but also in national and international non-governmental organizations provide free legal support to immigrants regarding their rights in Turkey and their access to these rights, and also organize information meetings on legal processes.

One of the most vulnerable groups with which lawyers communicate with immigrants is children. During the migration, children sometimes participate in this process with their families or family relatives, and sometimes they participate in the international migration process without the accompaniment of any family and relatives. Since children are open to all kinds of abuse and the principle of the best interest of the child should be applied in all business and transactions, lawyers work and take charge with immigrants in cases such as child protection and cooperation with relevant institutions and organizations (Kılıç, 2016). This situation makes it necessary to meet the legal needs of individuals and to overcome their problems. It is vital to meet these needs of people who are not informed about the legal situation of the country they live in so that they do not experience problems. In this context, lawyers working in non-governmental organizations with national qualifications and individually also provide services to ensure the rights and freedoms of irregular migrants regarding their thought, private property and religious beliefs (Ambrosin, 2015). In a study conducted by Coşkun (2017); He also stated that non-governmental organizations and

social service professional organizations that have adopted rights advocacy play an important role in making the violations of rights of irregular migrants visible, creating awareness in the public and taking legal measures on these issues. It is stated that lawyers in non-governmental organizations working in the field of migration undertake a great responsibility in terms of raising awareness and informing people about their rights through legal consultancy in order to prevent violations of rights.

When the literature is examined, studies in this field show that the role of lawyers is very important in the area of humanitarian aid. A survey by Kagan explores the role of lawyers in determining the legal status of immigrants and their access to legal aid in Egypt (Kagan, 2006). In Egypt, the legal assistance provided is associated with the increase in the welfare level of immigrants. However, legal aid in appeals and status determination is associated with a significant success rate (Kagan, 2006). In addition, it is emphasized in the study that regardless of the form of legal aid, ethical and professional qualifications should be considered. It is also stated that the cooperation of lawyers working in legal aid in Egypt with other international institutions and organizations working in the field is very important and facilitated immigrants' access to legal aid (Kagan, 2006).

Anagnost (2000) consider that, the dynamic operation of legitimate help within the field of relocation within the European and Baltic States is one of the biggest issues (Anagnost, 2000). It is expressed that the states in CEBS are obliged to supply the legitimate help to migrants, but in most states, there is a colossal crevice since the institutions/organizations that will provide this help are not indicated (Anagnost, 2000). It is expressed that the openness in this range makes challenges for both the state and people in numerous diverse issues, such as the security of workers and their get to to social components. It is passed on that these issues can be unraveled at the state level with long-term reciprocal arrangements which protection-oriented legitimate help ought to be actuated.

Another consider from Galli (2020) analyzes how compassion works within the United States that avoid nonnatives as nation-states. When the key actors and components working within the compassionate field are recognized, Lawful mediators (attorneys) are the central performing artists

in this field, and their parts are decided (Galli, 2020). These obligations are; surveying the extradition forms of undocumented foreigners based on the state's movement hone; deciding pertinence by coordinating lived involvement with barely characterized qualification criteria of helpful arrangements; and turning unmeasurable into quantifiable pointers by changing the excruciating encounters of foreigners into a typical asset (Galli, 2020).

One think about investigates the lawful status of Syrian outcasts in Lebanon within the light of a think about on immigrants' get to to legitimate help and attorneys (Janmyr, 2016). In the study, one of the foremost imperative reasons why the nation has issues in terms of inner and outside relocation is the definition of status and the get to of migrants to lawful help due to this definition issue. It was expressed that there is no official neighborhood transient enactment in Lebanon. Instep, refuge issues are tended to through movement laws that track everyone's section and exit and allude to displaced people. The Lebanese Government does not by and large donate legitimate impact to the allowing of giving status to migrants. It treats most Syrian migrants as unlawful workers who are likely to be captured, making a legitimate crevice in this nation (Janmyr, 2016).

#### **4.1 Psychological well-being of people who are working with migrants**

In research on humanitarian aid workers working in different types of disasters and emergencies; especially acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety disorder are evaluated (Alvarez & Hunt, 2005). There are research results showing that helping creates positive feelings in humanitarian aid workers as well as the situations created by not being able to help cause trauma in people (Şavur, 2012). If the services provided in the field of humanitarian aid create a more collective and healthy society, it can have a positive effect on the people working in this field (Nolte, 2018). In the literature, it is stated that helping behavior has positive effects on people working in the field of humanitarian aid, not only socially but also individually (Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott, 2016).

It is also stated that with helping behavior, people's self-resources develop and their cognitive and emotional capacities are supported (Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott, 2016).

Psychological stress can occur in individuals working in the field due to the excessive workload and the traumatic situations they experience (Tesi, Aiello, & Giannetti, 2018). These people are also considered an emotional labor because they may experience psychological stress that is arising from high emotional demands from dealing with traumatized people (Brotheridge & Grandey). Psychological well-being has been defined as managing the existential challenges faced in life-such as maintaining meaningful goals, personal development, and establishing quality relationships with other. (Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002).

Some individuals experience psychological problems after being exposed to traumatic situations, but may continue to work in disasters, even individuals may feel better emotionally and professionally after a certain period. Psychologically good individuals are expected to have higher job and private life satisfaction, physical and mental health, self-confidence, motivation, and positive thinking power (Keleş, 2017). Psychological well-being should not be thought of as not just a mental disorder; positive factors such as enjoying life, happiness and meeting needs should be considered as factors conducive to psychological well-being (Keleş, 2017). In addition, psychological well-being relates to an individual's development and self-realization as well as having a full and satisfying life (Matud, Curbelo, & Fortes, 2019). In order to deal with problems, humanitarian relief workers always seek or strive to acquire psychosocial help for their personal, professional, and environmental well-being (McKay & Orosa, 2020).

In the absence of psychological well-being, some diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, blood pressure and stomach disorders may occur physically in individuals working in the field of trauma and crisis; psychologically, traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, acute stress disorder, substance abuse, suicidal tendency, burnout syndrome, sexual dysfunctions and post-traumatic stress disorders can be seen (Kutluoğlu Karayel, 2018). For psychological well-being, it is considered appropriate for people working with trauma victims to do awareness studies and self-care activities at the first stage (Zara & İçöz, 2015). The concept of psychological well-being is complex, and studies in the field of physical health have examined a wide range of pleasant subjective experiences and cognitions (Hernandez & et al., 2017).



#### **4.2. Burnout**

Today, the most accepted definition of burnout belongs to Maslach. Burnout is seen as emotional exhaustion, low personal accomplishment, and depersonalization in those who have an intense personal relationship with people as a requirement of their work (Maslach, C., 2015). When the concept of burnout first emerged, it was used as a synonym for stress, but later it was understood that burnout emerged because of stress. Namely, stress occurs when the individual experiences an imbalance because of impositions (Maraşlı, 2005). Burnout has piqued the scientific community's interest and has become a source of concern for workers, as it is now recognized as a severe professional hazard and a psychosocial danger at work (Queirós & et al., 2020). Burnout can also be a long-term process of resource depletion and poor responses to continuous job stress, and it is difficult to tell the difference between it and depression because they have similar symptoms (Golonka, Mojsa-Kaja, Blukacz, & Gawłowska, 2019).

People who give psychosocial support to asylum-seekers and refugees are at high-risk of working problems and burnout (Gemignani & Giliberto, 2019). Burnout begins in case of destructive or extreme stress in working life. Burnout is a waste of enthusiasm, energy, idealism, perspective, and purpose (Hablemitoğlu & Özmete, 2012). Burnout consists of three components: emotional exhaustion (negative changes perceived in work-related attitudes and behaviors), mental exhaustion (depersonalization) and decrease in success (Hablemitoğlu & Özmete, 2012). Some factors that include individual characteristics, coping mechanism, motivation, social support, working conditions and support from both colleagues and supervisor may affect this burnout situation (Hamama, 2012). Burnout can be counted as one of the important outcomes of chronic stress (prolonged stress) and one that can affect the people effectiveness, who have worked in humanitarian area, negatively (Collings & Murray, 1996).

Burnout is generally linked with caregiving and service professions (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, Job burnout, 2001) and it generally occurs most often among lawyers, social workers and psychologist (Pines, 1993). The professionals who experiences burnout begins to come to work late,

stay away from work, not get satisfaction from the job, not take care of applicants and not provide the desired service to them (Ceylan, Gül, & Öksüz, 2016). Demonstrates negative, judgmental and cold behavior towards the client. Professionals may feel inadequate in solving the problems of the applicants. One of the syndrom of burnout is linked with increased some feelings of emotional exhaustion that people who work in humanitarian area feel they cannot be able to give of themselves at a psychological level (Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, 2002).

In addition, depersonalization that is about developing negative thoughts and feelings towards people in need (Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, 2002). Thirdly, decreasing in personal achievements, and feels dissatisfied with their work achievement is another possible symptoms of burnout (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual, 1996). Basic factors affecting the individual's burnout; the individual works in a stressful environment for a long time and fails to combat stress (Akbolat & Işık, 2008).

Studies in the literature indicate that the past traumatic experiences of people working with clients who have traumatic experiences are triggered and reactions defined as *traumatic counter-transference* occur (Herman, 1992). While it has been revealed that the opposing transference reactions exhibited in some cases have a rescuing effect, it has been revealed that in some cases this situation may be related to the employees' defense mechanisms such as omnipotence, denial, excessive identification or avoidance and feelings of helplessness, anger, grief, inadequacy, shame or guilt (Herman, 1992).

#### **4.3. Secondary Traumatic Stress**

Stress is a factor affecting the individual's biopsychosocial life and disrupting the existing balance. It has been suggested that the reaction to stress may vary from person to person and according to the life period of the individual, as well as the process of making sense of stress is important in terms of reactions (Öztürk & Uluşahin, 2008). Direct (primary) or secondary exposures to traumatic life events can cause emotional damage in individuals. Secondary traumatic stress is defined as indirect exposure to

trauma in a professional relationship with the person or people who have experienced the traumatic event directly (Yıldırım, Kıdak, & Yurdabakan, 2018). Also, secondary traumatic stress is defined as the psychological symptoms shown by the professionals who witnessed a traumatic event that caused serious stress in the life of the person, who shared the knowledge of this event and who took part in the aid work carried out against this person (Özkul & Var, 2018). It is stated that professionals working with individuals in need of help are affected by the perspective of their clients on events and can show the same attitude with them (Özkul & Var, 2018). Secondary traumatization occurs when trying to help the victim, so the concept of secondary trauma is used when professionals helping trauma victims describe their own trauma.

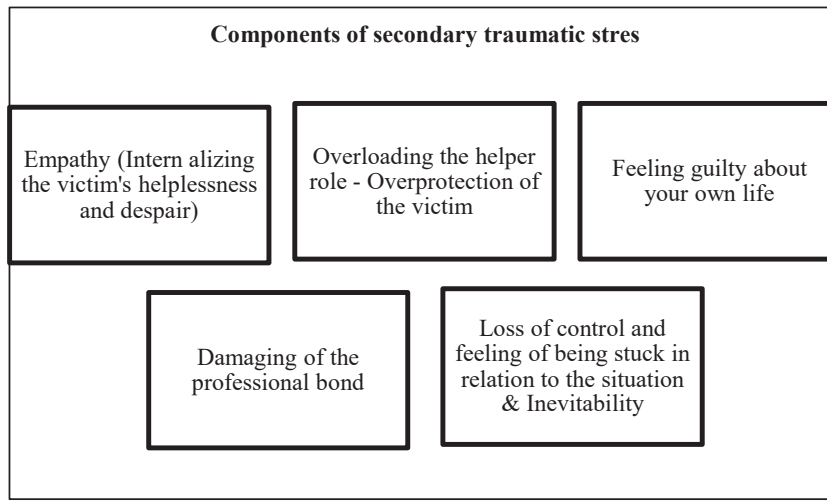


Figure 4.Components of secondary traumatic stress (Yılmaz, 2019).

Human rights defenders may be indirectly affected by traumatic content through exposure such as listening to the details of overly compelling stories, traumatic memories, having difficulty to digest information, and having to watch video images (Yılmaz, 2019).

As in post-traumatic stress disorder, secondary traumatic stress responses include intrusive thoughts, avoidance reactions, over-arousal, emotional experiences that disturb the individual, difficulties with sleep, and functional impairment (McCann & Pearlmann, 1990).

Physical Reactions	Emotional Reactions	Behavioral and Social Reactions	Mental Reactions
Chronic fatigue	Anxiety and fear	Avoiding from family and friends	Memory problems
Sleep problems	Triggering their own traumas	Difficulties in communications	Confusion
Blood pressure problems	Anger	Getting away from previously enjoyed activities	Slow thinking and having problem comprehension
Digestive system problems	Sadness & Feelings of guilt and Hopelessness	Outbursts of anger, frequent arguments	Difficulty in planning, setting priorities and making decisions
Changes in appetite, weight loss or increase	Despair & Unhappiness	Crying	Concentration problems
Chronic pains	Loss of ideals & pessimism	Increased use of alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs	
Weakening of the immune system	Feeling worthless & feeling lonely and exhausted	Insecurity in the environment and people & decrease in teamwork performance	

Figure 5. Short-term responses to trauma (Yılmaz, 2019).

#### 4.3.1. Secondary Traumatic Stress

In Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-V (DSM-V), the second trauma is included under the title of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, that is, DSM V accepts secondary trauma as a diagnostic criterion. According to DSM V, apart from being primarily exposed to a traumatic event, individuals experience traumatic stress indirectly such as witnessing or learning about a traumatic event (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Secondary traumatic stress is also called compassion fatigue because it occurs as a result of individuals' behavior of helping victims (Figley, 1995). When the PTSD diagnostic criteria in the current DSM-5 are examined; Criterion A, which evaluates the type of exposure of the person to traumatic experiences, consists of 4 sub-criteria: direct exposure (A1);

witnessing the event (A2); learning that a traumatic event (as a result of brute force or accident) has happened to a relative or close friend (A3); repetitive or excessive confrontation with details of traumatic events due to occupational requirements (A4). It is understood from the last two subscales that an individual who is subjected to a traumatic event secondary to the event may exhibit symptoms similar to those experienced by a person directly exposed to the event and may be at risk of developing PTSD. Responses to primary exposure to trauma and secondary exposure are quite similar (Kahil & Palabıyıkoglu, 2018). While the perceived threat in primary exposure is directed to the subject, in secondary exposure, the threat is related to the life of the relative, acquaintance or the person with whom she or he interacts due to his job rather than the individual herself or himself (Kahil & Palabıyıkoglu, 2018).

#### **4.3.2. Symptoms of Secondary Traumatic Stress**

Secondary Traumatic Stress includes a number of symptoms that occur after a traumatic event experienced or witnessed, which are long-lasting and interrupt a person's daily life. It is possible to group these symptoms under the headings of reliving, avoidance, increased arousal and negative changes in cognition and mood (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The difficulties experienced by professionals diagnosed with Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder; it is possible to group them under clusters of reliving, avoidance, and increased arousal symptoms. The focus of these symptoms, which are quite like PTSD, is the traumatic experience of the person with whom the interaction is made (Kahil & Palabıyıkoglu, 2018).

For example, a relevant professional may repeatedly recall an individual who has lost a limb or the disturbing details of the individual now of the accident. In addition, the individual or the individual who experienced the accident may dream of the traumatic experience of the accident or suddenly feel that he experienced the moment of the accident, and upon encountering all these reminders, it creates a psychological distress. Symptoms of secondary traumatic stress usually appear rapidly and after a specific event and these symptoms are shorter lasting but can have long-term effects (Gürkan & Yalçın, 2017).

#### **4.3.3. Coping Strategies for overcoming secondary traumatic stress**

Traumatic stress has become a part of everyday life for human rights defenders. While this may seem to reduce the disturbance of trauma exposure (direct or indirect) through habituation, it may reduce its disturbance, but constantly being threatened and experiencing traumatic witnesses requires making stress management a part of life (Yılmaz, 2019).

First of all, stress management does not aim to avoid or try not to experience some negative emotions (such as fear, sadness, anger), contrary to a common mistaken belief. This act of management begins with trying to recognize and understand negative emotions. Some effective physical methods of stress management are physical exercise, review of posture, diaphragm breathing, gradual muscle relaxation and proper nutrition (Yılmaz, 2019).

Secondly, the benefits of exercise for the human body have been demonstrated by scientific research. In the management of emotions related to anger, anxiety and depression with the release of dopamine, serotonin, norepinephrine, endorphin and other endocannabinoids released in the brain during exercise; in increasing motivation, attention processes, and impulse control, thus reducing stress by strengthening prefrontal connections; in thinking, learning, remembering. It has been shown to have important benefits in the formation of new cells in the brain (Şahin, 2014).

Thirdly, relaxation techniques is important in dealing with stress. During the relaxation exercise, the parasympathetic part of the nervous system, which slows down all systems except for the two organ groups (digestion and reproduction), is activated (when the parasympathetic system is activated, it accelerates the digestive and reproductive systems, nutrition, growth and repair processes). Systematic relaxation is not a leisure activity sleep, mental passivity. During exercise, the mind is very active in focusing attention. After the exercise is over, the person feels rested and receptive. It is stated that people who can do these exercises regularly react to stress with a lower level of neural stimulation, their metabolism slows down, they suffer from stress-related diseases less frequently, and their mental and perceptual functioning improves even more.

Since all attention is paid to breathing and relaxation of the muscles during the relaxation exercise, this exercise enables the prefrontal region of the brain to be activated as an exercise that focuses attention. Therefore, the connections from this region to the lower brain regions are strengthened, and the functions of this region to manage body functions, emotions, delay impulses, increase empathy, and reveal conscientious behavior are also increased (Yılmaz, 2019).

#### **4.3.4. Lawyers who are under risk at Secondary Traumatic Stress**

Police, lawyers, prosecutors, and judges involved in the identification, apprehension and trial of criminals examine the elements of the crime in detail and witness physical or psychological destructions. While these people provide legal services to people, they witness the cruelty and suffering in the world very vividly. Sometimes they cannot get enough support from the management about the difficulties they experience in their duties and try to fulfill their duties with limited resources (Slattery & Goodman, 2009). Lawyers are particularly at risk for exposure to traumatic material. Examples include listening to the testimony of traumatized victims about physical or sexual assault, murder, child abuse, refugee rights, or exposure to disturbing content of evidence to be used in such cases. Various studies have shown that people with professions such as lawyers, police officers, prosecutors, emergency workers, psychiatrists, social workers, judges, search and rescue specialists and psychologists may be indirectly affected by traumatic events and be at risk (Chamberlain & Miller, 2009). When the studies conducted in the field are examined, it is seen that mental health professionals and social workers generally look at the secondary traumatic stress formation. However, it is noticed that the studies are less conducted for lawyers or judges. Lawyers representing victims are also highly likely to show secondary traumatic stress as they learn the details of the traumatic event and the empathic relationship with the victim becomes stronger. Some studies show that primarily criminal lawyers experience more stress and depression than other lawyers; it was also revealed that they show more deterioration in their beliefs about themselves and the world (Vrklevski & Franklin, 2008). At the same time, studies with lawyers found that personal trauma history is associated with an increase in secondary trauma level (Vrklevski & Franklin, 2008).

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

In this section, methodological information about the model of the research, which consists of the population and the sample, how the data are collected and how they are analyzed are included. This section is grouped under 6 main headings.

1. Research Model
2. Universe and Sample
3. Data Collection Methods and Tools
5. Scales
6. Analysis of Data

### **5.1. Research Model**

The main aim of this research is to examine the secondary traumatic stress levels of lawyers working in the field of migration in terms of some demographic variables. This research was designed in quantitative method. Lawyers working in institutions serving in the field of migration were included in the research, and it was tried to reveal what the secondary traumatic stress levels of lawyers were by obtaining data suitable for the main purpose of the research.

### **5.2. Universe and Sample**

The universe of this study consisted of lawyers who are working in all national and international civil society organizations in Turkey, in Ankara Courthouse and state-private sector. While creating the sample of the research, the sectioning approach was used. The sample of the study consisted of professionals who worked in the above-mentioned institutions and organizations.

While creating the sample of this research, a list of relevant institutions and organizations was prepared, and then the data was collected from the lists in the institutions until the desired number was reached. While the participants were selected, it was considered that they are still working with asylum seekers and immigrants. Data were collected from 114 participants who met these conditions. While collecting data from the participants, volunteerism was taken as a basis. The individuals generally filled



the forms and scales willingly, and they were informed about the subject and purpose of the research before collecting the data.

### **5.3. Data Collection Methods and Tools**

Form and scale were used to collect data, Personal Information Form and related scales were prepared as Google Forms. The collection of data was carried out in the form of an e-mail application. Participation in the study was provided on a voluntary basis. Necessary explanations were made to the professionals about the forms and scales, and it was stated that the data obtained would be kept confidential and would not be used except for research. It took approximately 15 minutes for the professionals to fill the Personal Information Form and the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale Turkish Form. “Personal Information Form” was used to define the personal and professional characteristics of professionals, and “Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale Turkish Form” was used to measure secondary traumatic stress levels. In order to use the scales in this study, permission was obtained from Expert Psychologist and Psychological Counselor Ayla KAHİL via e-mail and also to perform the study permission was obtained from TED University Ethical Committee on 28/03/2021 with decision no. 15 at the 2021/03 Meeting.

### **5.4. Scales**

#### **5.4.1. Demografic Information Form**

The questions in the Demografic Information Form were prepared by the researcher by using similar studies conducted before. Eight questions were asked in the Demografic Information Form, the questions were prepared as short answer and multiple choice. The questions were prepared in accordance with the general purpose and sub-objectives of the research and were formed to describe the individual characteristics and professional characteristics of the professionals participating in the research. The questions were prepared under two main headings.

1. Individual Characteristics (individuals' age, gender, education level, marital status)

2. Professional Characteristics (in which institution they participated in migration studies, years of working experience in the field of migration).

#### **5.4.2. Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale-Turkish Version**

“Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale Turkish Version” was used to determine the secondary traumatic stress level of lawyers. The Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale was developed by Bride et al. in 2004. The construct validity and reliability analyzes of the scale, together with the translation of the scale, were made by Psychologist and Psychological Counselor Ayla Kâhil in 2016. In the factor analysis, it was seen that the scale explained 34% of the variance. According to these classical factor analysis results, the scale can be accepted as a one-dimensional scale in terms of its structure (Kaya A. , 2005)

The scale is in 5-point Likert type and consists of 17 items. The scale evaluates the symptoms seen in the last 7 days in individuals. The items in the scale were prepared on the basis of criterion B (Re-experiencing), criterion C (avoidance) and criterion D (arousal) described under the diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition). Scale items were prepared as “(1) Never”, “(2) Rarely”, “(3) Sometimes”, “(4) Often”, “(5) Very Often”, is rated as 5. The lowest score that can be obtained from an item is 1, and the highest score is 5. A high score indicates a high level of affect. The range of scores that can be obtained from the scale is between 17 and 85, and a high score indicates a high level of influence (Kahil & Palabıyıkoglu, 2018). Bride et al. (2004) calculated the internal consistency coefficient of the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale as .94 for the total scale, and .83, .89 and .85 for the Intrusion, Avoidance, and Arousal subscales (Bride, 2007). Items 2, 3, 6, 10, and 13 of the scale measures intrusion, items 1, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, and 17 measure avoidance, and items 4, 8, 11, 15, and 16 measure arousal symptoms. In order to be able to talk about the existence of the mentioned PTSD diagnostic criteria, at least one item measuring involuntary influences, at least three items measuring avoidance symptoms, and at least two items measuring arousal symptoms should be marked as “sometimes” and above. Presence of all three criteria at the same

time means that the practitioner may receive a probable PTSD diagnosis (Kahil, 2016)

### **5.6. Analysis of Data**

Data analysis consists of two parts. The first part is the psychometric characteristics of the Scale in the study population. Reliability analysis and confirmatory factor analysis (SEM) were performed to examine the STSS reliability and validity levels of participants measurements. Fit indices were calculated in the SEM model. Mann Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis test were used to analyze the scale scores according to the demographic and other characteristics of the participants. Correlation and regression analysis were performed to examine the relationships between the sub-dimensions of the study and STS. ROC (Receiver-Operating Characteristic) analysis was performed to determine the cut-off point in the scale according to STS levels and to examine its consistency. AUROC (Area Under The Receiver Operating Characteristic) values were calculated to compare ROC areas. For statistical evaluation, SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science, Chicago, IL, USA) 19.0 Windows package program was used and  $\alpha=0.05$  was taken as the critical decision-making value. Confirmatory factor analysis (SEM) was performed with the AMOS 20.00 program. Power level and effect size calculations calculated in the study G\*Power Version 3.1.7. detected with.

### **6.1. Reliability and Validity Levels of the Scale**

Since the study population is not known exactly, the power and sample level of the study were calculated by taking Beck (2016)'s study as a reference. Beck (2016) studied 121 participants in his study. According to the study of Beck (2016), it can be seen that  $n=113$  participants, which are planned to be included in the research, can represent the study with 90% power (values of 0.70 and above are valid in studies, and 0.80 is expected to be quite sufficient). It has been observed that the study will be conducted with 113 individuals. In addition, the effect size level of the study was found to be 0.46 and high (0.10 expressed as low, 0.25 medium and 0.40 large effect size). In summary, it is seen that the study has sufficient power and the effect size level is quite sufficient. The study was conducted on the valid data of  $n=114$  participants at the end of the data collection process.

The construct validity of the scale was examined by carrying out a confirmatory factor analysis. Several fit indices were used to test the scales three factorial construct. Please see Table 1 for the fit parameters that were used.

When the  $\chi^2$ , AGFI, GFI, CFI, IFI, RMSEA, SRMR, PNFI and PGFI compliance parameters of the scale were examined, each parameter was examined for the application. In addition, in Table 2, reliability, factor loading, internal consistency, explained variance, KMO levels and other reliability and validity parameters are given. Finally, the Structural Equation Diagram was drawn and the regression weights of the roads were calculated. In the confirmatory factor analysis study, which was applied according to 17 items and three sub-dimensions in accordance with the original form of the scale, it was observed that the contribution of all items to the scale was statistically significant at the 95% confidence level ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the scale, avoidance (1-5-7-9-12-14-17), Intrusion (2-3-6-10-13), Arousal (4-8-11-15-16) sub-dimensions were determined in accordance with the original form

**Table 1:** Examining the Levels of Compliance of STSS Sub-Dimensions

Fit Indexes	Value	Fit Status	Perfect Fit Criteria	Acceptable Fit Criteria
<sup>1</sup> $\chi^2/sd$	1.94	Perfect Fit	$0 \leq \chi^2/sd \leq 2$	$2 \leq \chi^2/sd \leq 3$
<sup>2</sup> AGFI	0.96	Perfect Fit	$.90 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	$.85 \leq AGFI \leq .90$
<sup>3</sup> GFI	0.98	Perfect Fit	$.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq GFI \leq .95$
<sup>3</sup> CFI	0.96	Perfect Fit	$.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq CFI \leq .95$
<sup>3</sup> IFI	0.97	Perfect Fit	$.95 \leq IFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq IFI \leq .95$
<sup>4</sup> RMSEA	0.05	Perfect Fit	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.05 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$
<sup>4</sup> SRMR	0.05	Perfect Fit	$.00 \leq SRMR \leq .05$	$.05 \leq SRMR \leq .10$
<sup>5</sup> PNFI	0.73	Acceptable Fit	$.95 \leq PNFI \leq 1.00$	$.50 \leq PNFI \leq .95$
<sup>6</sup> PGFI	0.69	Acceptable Fit	$.95 \leq PGFI \leq 1.00$	$.50 \leq PGFI \leq .95$

1(Kline, 2011), 2(Schermelleh-Engel & Moosbrugger, 2003), 3(Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996; Bentler, 1980; Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Marsh, Hau, Artelt, Baumert & Peschar, 2006), 4(Browne & Cudeck, 1993), 5(Hu & Bentler, 1999), 6(Meyers, Gamst & Guarino, 2006)

When  $\chi^2$ , AGFI fit parameters are examined in the study, it can be seen that the dimensions obtained in the study have an excellent level of fit. When the compliance parameters of GFI, CFI, IFI, RMSEA, SRMR, PNFI and PGFI are examined, it is seen that there is an acceptable level of agreement in the study. Since the fit indices have strengths and weaknesses in evaluating the fit between the theoretical model and the real data, it is recommended to use many fit index values to reveal the fit of the model. The most commonly used ones (Chi-Square Test of Fit (Chi-Square-Goodness), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normalized Index of Fit (NFI), Root of Mean Errors (RMR) or RMS) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximate Errors (RMSEA) (Büyüköztürk et al. 2004: 217). In the study, the factor loadings of the scale and the summability of the sub-factors were evaluated with the Tukey summability test. According to the Tukey summability test, it was concluded that the scale is suitable for adding a scale total score ( $p=0.19$ ,  $p>0.05$ ).

Whether the response levels of the participants to the scale items were equal or not was evaluated with the Hotelling  $T^2$  statistical test. As a result of this test, the Hotelling  $T^2$  test result of the scale was found to be significant ( $T^2=2954.56$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). It can be stated that there is no response bias in the scale. It has been determined that the scale, as 3 sub-dimensions and 17 items, is generally suitable in terms of fit indices. The reliability level of the scale was found to be 0.94 for 17 statements.

This shows that the scale is reliable. It can be stated that there is no need to remove statements from the study in order to increase reliability.

**Table 2:** Examination of Sub-Dimensions

Dimension	Explained Variance	Internal Consistency	KMO	X $\pm$ s.d
Avoidance	21%	0,79	0,87	20,72 $\pm$ 5,27
Intrusion	24%	0,83		16,21 $\pm$ 4,21
Arousal	23%	0,81		15,61 $\pm$ 4,39
Total STS	68%	0,94		51,33 $\pm$ 12,62

The three dimensions obtained account for approximately 68% of the total variance. The explained variance is expected to be 60% or more in such studies. When the dimensions were examined, the explained percentage of variance of the Avoidance dimension was 21%, and the internal consistency was 0.79. The explained percentage of variance of the intrusion dimension was 24%, and the internal consistency was 0.783. The percentage of variance explained for the Arousal dimension was 23%, and the internal consistency was 0.81.

In the study, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) coefficient was used to determine whether the sample size was sufficient to explain the changes in the scale, and the Barlet's test was used to determine whether the structure was significant. It was seen that the KMO level of the scale was 0.87 and the sample size was sufficient. According to the result of Barlet's test, it is seen that the structure is significant (Barlet's  $X^2=1328.25$ ,  $p=0.01$ ). It shows that the three-dimensional structure obtained in the study is significant and that the number of  $n=114$  participants included in the study is sufficient for the evaluation of the scale.

The scale was found to be reliable and valid with its three sub-dimensions. Concordance levels, on the other hand, are generally stated to be at good and acceptable levels. In the evaluations, it was observed that the reliability and construct validity of 17 statements with 3 sub-dimensions were ensured. While making the evaluation, it was seen that the fit indices of the one-dimensional structure were acceptable as an alternative.

**Table 3:** Examination of the relationships between STS sub-dimensions

		<b>Avoidance</b>	<b>Intrusion</b>	<b>Arousal</b>	<b>Total STS</b>
<b>Avoidance</b>	r	1			
	p				
<b>Intrusion</b>	r	0,79*	1		
	p	0,01			
<b>Arousal</b>	r	0,73*	0,77*	1	
	p	0,01	0,01		
<b>Total STS</b>	r	0,91**	0,92*	0,90*	1
	p	0,01	0,01	0,01	

\*\*Spearman correlation test was applied. \*Significant difference at 0.05 level

It was determined that there was a strong and positive significant relationship between the participants' Avoidance levels and Intrusion levels ( $r=0.79$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

It was determined that there was a strong and positive significant relationship between the participants' Avoidance levels and Arousal levels ( $r=0.73$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

It was determined that there was a strong and positive significant relationship between the participants' Intrusion levels and Arousal levels ( $r=0.77$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

It was determined that there was a very strong and positively significant relationship between the participants' Avoidance levels and total STS levels ( $r=0.91$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

It was determined that there was a very strong and positively significant relationship between the intrusion levels of the participants and the total STS levels ( $r=0.92$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

It was determined that there was a very strong and positively significant relationship between the Arousal levels of the participants and their total STS levels ( $r=0.90$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

**Table 4:** Modeling of the relations between the sub-dimensions affecting the STS level

Dependant Variables	Independant Variables			F	R <sup>2</sup>
	Avoidance ( $\beta$ )	Intrusion ( $\beta$ )	Arousal ( $\beta$ )		
Total STS (Y)	0,37	0,36	0,35	2596,02	0,98
	t=18,96	t=17,37	t=18,47	(p=0.01)	
	p=0,01	p=0,01	p=0,01		

As a result of the regression analysis in the table, it is seen that there is a significant correlation between Total STS and the levels of avoidance, intrusion and arousal sub-dimensions.

In the study, the model found between social STS and avoidance, intrusion and arousal sub-dimensions was found to be significant ( $F=2596.02$ ,  $p=0.01$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). It was observed that the percentage of explanation of the model was 98% ( $R^2=0.98$ ) and this rate was quite high. Finally, the coefficients of avoidance, intrusion and arousal dimensions were also found to be significant ( $p=0.01$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). According to the results of the Durbin Watson Test performed to examine the presence of autocorrelation in the model, it was observed that there was no autocorrelation in the model ( $D.W=1.87$ ). As a result, the model was found to be significant.

The model obtained as a result of the analysis is as follows;

$$STS (Y) = (0.37) * \text{Avoidance} \pm (0.36) * \text{Intrusion} \pm (0.35) * \text{Arousal}$$

When the results were examined, it was seen that the most important factor affecting the total STS level was the avoidance level. Although the effect of Intrusion and Arousal levels were at lower levels, it was determined that the contribution of all three sub-dimensions to the STS level was at similar levels.

When the coefficients ( $\beta$ ) in the model are examined, it is seen that a change in Avoidance levels by one unit will change the Total STS level by 0.37 units. It was observed that the effect of Intrusion and Arousal I levels would affect STS levels as 0.36 and 0.35 units, respectively.

**Table 5:** Determination of Cut-off Points of Scale Scores According to Listening to a Traumatic Event

Test Result Variable(s)	Area	p	95% Confidence		cut-off	Sensitivity	Specificity
			Interval				
			Lower	Upper			
Avoidance	0,63	0,03*	0,345	0,865	13,5	0,88	0,79
Intrusion	0,60	0,04*	0,348	0,843	11,5	0,81	0,71
Arousal	0,65	0,02*	0,418	0,889	6,50	0,99	0,73
Total STS	0,69	0,01*	0,327	0,857	27,5	0,98	0,74

\*\*ROC analysis was performed. \* Significance at 0.05 level



In the study, ROC analysis was used to calculate the cut-off point of the scale scores according to the STS level and the situation of encountering a traumatic event in the sub-dimensions of avoidance, intrusion and arousal.

In the study, it was determined that the accuracy of the cut-off point calculated according to the avoidance level was 63% (AUROC= 0.63,  $p=0.03$ ). It was determined that the sensitivity value of the cut-off point, which was determined as 13.5 according to the avoidance level, was 0.88 and the specificity value was 0.79.

In the study, it was determined that the accuracy of the cut-off point calculated according to the intrusion level was 60% (AUROC= 0.60,  $p=0.04$ ). It was determined that the sensitivity value of the cut-off point, which was determined as 11.5 according to the intrusion level, was 0.81 and the specificity value was 0.73.

In the study, it was determined that the accuracy of the cut-off point calculated according to the Arousal level was 65% (AUROC= 0.65,  $p=0.02$ ). It was determined that the sensitivity value of the cut-off point, which was determined as 6.5 according to the arousal level, was 0.99 and the specificity value was 0.73.

In the study, it was determined that the accuracy of the cut-off point calculated according to the General STS level was 69% (AUROC= 0.69,  $p=0.01$ ). The cut-off point, which was determined as 27.5 according to the General STS level, was found to have a sensitivity value of 0.99 and a specificity value of 0.74.

## 6.2. Demographic Charecteristics and Secondary Stress Levels of Participants

**Table 6:** General Characteristics of the Participants

		n	%
Sex	Male	67	58,8%
	Female	47	41,2%
Age	24-28 age	21	18,4%
	29-33 age	51	44,7%
	34 age and above	42	36,8%
Marital status	Single	71	62,3%
	Married	43	37,7%
Education	Undergraduate	64	56,1%
	Graduate	50	43,9%
Profesional Seniority	3 years and below	31	27,2%
	4-9 years	63	55,3%
	10 years and above	20	17,5%
Having to listen to a traumatic experience	Yes	107	93,9%
	No	7	6,1%

In the study, the descriptive statistical analyses i.e., frequencies showed that the mean age level of the participants was 31.28 (S=5.22) years old, the youngest participant was 20 years old and the oldest participant was 52 years old.

18.4% of the participants were 24-28 years old, 44.7% were 29-33 years old, and 36.8% were 34 years old and over. 62.3% of the participants were single with undergraduate education (56.1%). The mean professional seniority levels of the participants were 6,73 (S=4,50) years. The least senior participant was 1, and the most senior participant was 28 years.3 years and below with 27.2%, 4-9 years with 55.3%, 10 years and above with 17.5%. 93.9% of the participants had to listen to a traumatic experience at least once during their professional life. Those who reported that s/he has

never listen to the traumatic experience (7 participants) were involved in all statistical analyses.

**Table 7:** Examining the STS levels of the participants according to their Gender

Dims	Sex	n	X±s.d.	p	Π <sup>2</sup>
<b>Avoidance</b>	Male	67	19,37±5,02	0,01*	0,35
	Female	47	22,64±5,07		
<b>Intrusion</b>	Male	67	15,22±4,24	0,01*	0,26
	Female	47	17,62±3,77		
<b>Arousal</b>	Male	67	14,96±4,19	0,06	-
	Female	47	16,53±4,55		
<b>Total STS</b>	Male	67	48,04±12,17	0,01*	0,18
	Female	47	56,02±11,85		

\*\*Mann Whitney U test,

\*Significant difference at the level of 0.05 Π<sup>2</sup> (effect size)

The results of Mann Whitney U test showed that, male and female participants' STS scores were significantly different in two subscales and total scale score. Female participants's score were higher then that of males on intrusion, avoidance and thetotal scale score. Men and women participants' arousal level was not statisticly different.

Avoidance levels were found to differ according to the gender of the participants (p=0.01). It was determined that the reason for the difference was due to the fact that the Aviodance levels of the female participants were higher than the males. The effect size level of the difference was found to be moderate (Π<sup>2</sup> =0.26).

It was determined that arousal levels were not at different levels according to gender. It can be stated that the Arousal levels of male and female participants are similar (p=0.06).

It has been determined that STS levels differ according to gender. It was determined that the reason for the difference was due to the fact

that the General STS levels of female participants were higher than that of males. However, the effect size of the significant difference was found to be weak ( $\Pi^2 = 0.18$ ).

**Table 8:** Examining the STS levels of the participants according to their marital status

dim	Marital Status	n	X $\pm$ s.d.	p	$\Pi^2$
Avoidance	Single	71	21,69 $\pm$ 21,69	0,01*	0,27
	Married	43	19,12 $\pm$ 19,12		
Intrusion	Single	71	16,94 $\pm$ 16,94	0,02*	0,19
	Married	43	15,00 $\pm$ 15,00		
Arousal	Single	71	16,25 $\pm$ 16,25	0,04*	0,15
	Married	43	14,53 $\pm$ 14,53		
Total STS	Single	71	53,56 $\pm$ 53,56	0,01*	0,21
	Married	43	47,65 $\pm$ 47,65		

\*\*Mann Whitney U test,

\*Significant difference at 0.05 level

The results of Mann Whitney U test showed that the avoidance levels of the participants differed according to their marital status ( $p=0.01$ ). The avoidance levels of single participants were higher than married participants. The effect size level of the difference was found to be moderate ( $\Pi^2 = 0.27$ ).

It was determined that the intrusion levels of the participants differed according to their marital status ( $p=0.02$ ). It was determined that the reason for the difference was due to the fact that the intrusion levels of the single participants were higher than the married ones. The effect size level of the difference was found to be weak ( $\Pi^2 = 0.19$ ).

Arousal levels were found to differ according to the marital status of the participants ( $p=0.04$ ). It was determined that the reason for the difference was due to the fact that the Arousal levels of the single participants were higher than the married ones. The effect size level of the difference was found to be weak ( $\Pi^2 = 0.15$ ).

It was determined that STS levels differ according to marital status ( $p=0.01$ ). It was determined that the reason for the difference was due to the fact that the General STS levels of the single participants were higher than those of the married participants.

It was observed that the effect size of the significant difference obtained was medium ( $\eta^2=0.21$ ).

**Table 9: Examining the STS levels of the participants according to their Educational Status**

dim	Education	n	X $\pm$ s.d.	p
<b>Avoidance</b>	Undergraduate	64	21,3 $\pm$ 5,62	0,19
	Graduate	50	19,98 $\pm$ 4,74	
<b>Intrusion</b>	Undergraduate	64	16,61 $\pm$ 4,29	0,25
	Graduate	50	15,7 $\pm$ 4,08	
<b>Arousal</b>	Undergraduate	64	15,56 $\pm$ 4,55	0,91
	Graduate	50	15,66 $\pm$ 4,22	
<b>Total STS</b>	Undergraduate	64	52,13 $\pm$ 13,18	0,45
	Graduate	50	50,32 $\pm$ 11,92	

**\*\*Mann Wihtney U test**

As it can be seen in Table 6, STS scores do not vary by the participant's level of education.

**Table 10:** Examination of the STS levels of the participants according to the Status of Encountering with the Traumatic Event

dim	Having to listen to a traumatic experience	n	X±s.d.	p
<b>Avoidance</b>	Yes	107	20,85±5,15	0,30
	No	7	18,71±7,06	
<b>Intrusion</b>	Yes	107	16,31±4,13	0,33
	No	7	14,71±5,41	
<b>Arousal</b>	Yes	107	15,79±4,22	0,07
	No	7	12,71±6,21	
<b>Total STS</b>	Yes	107	51,67±12,2	0,26
	No	7	46,14±18,33	

\*\*Mann Wihtney U test

It was determined that the levels of Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS did not differ according to the situation of the participants having to listen to a traumatic experience ( $p>0.05$ ). It can be stated that the Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS levels of the participants in the study who had or did not have to listen to a traumatic experience were similar.

**Table 11:** Examining the STS levels of the participants by age

dim	age	n	X±s.d.	p
<b>Avoidance</b>	24-28 age	21	21,71±5,57	0,06
	29-33 age	51	21,55±4,46	
	34 age or above	42	19,21±5,79	
<b>Intrusion</b>	24-28 age	21	17,05±4,10	0,10
	29-33 age	51	16,76±3,97	
	34 age or above	42	15,12±4,40	
<b>Arousal</b>	24-28 age	21	17,00±4,11	0,08
	29-33 age	51	15,92±3,62	
	34 age or above	42	14,52±5,16	
<b>Total STS</b>	24-28 age	21	53,76±11,03	0,12
	29-33 age	51	52,94±11,14	
	34 age or above	42	48,17±14,55	

\*\*Kruskall Wallis test

It was determined that the levels of Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS did not differ according to the age of the participants ( $p>0.05$ ). In the study, it can be stated that the Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS levels of the participants aged 24-28, 29-33 and over 34 were similar.

**Table 12:** Examining the STS levels of the participants according to their Professional Seniority Levels

dim	Seniority	n	X $\pm$ s.d.	p	post hoc.	$\eta^2$
<b>Avoidance</b>	3 years and below (1)	31	22,74 $\pm$ 5,21	0,01*	1,2>3	0,24
	4-9 years (2)	63	20,84 $\pm$ 4,77			
	10 years or above (3)	20	17,2 $\pm$ 5,34			
<b>Intrusion</b>	3 years and below (1)	31	17,77 $\pm$ 4,13	0,01*	1,2>3	0,22
	4-9 years (2)	63	16,3 $\pm$ 3,87			
	10 years and above (3)	20	13,5 $\pm$ 4,21			
<b>Arousal</b>	3 years and below (1)	31	16,74 $\pm$ 4,61	0,01*	1,2>3	0,23
	4-9 years (2)	63	15,68 $\pm$ 3,99			
	10 years and above (3)	20	13,6 $\pm$ 4,77			
<b>Total STS</b>	3 years and below(1)	31	55,65 $\pm$ 11,96	0,01*	1,2>3	0,25
	4-9 years (2)	63	51,76 $\pm$ 11,68			
	10 years and above (3)	20	43,3 $\pm$ 13,33			

\*\*Kruskall Wallis test, \*0,05 düzeyinde anlamlı farklılık

It was determined that the levels of Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS were significantly different according to the professional seniority levels of the participants ( $p=0.01$ ). In the study, it can be stated that the Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS levels of the participants with a professional seniority level of less than 9 years are higher than the participants with a seniority of 10 years or more. It was determined that the effect size levels in Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS dimensions were moderate.

**Table 13:** Examination of age and professional seniority levels and STS level

		Avoidance	Intrusion	Arousal	Total STS
<b>Age</b>	r	-0,21*	-0,21*	-0,12	-0,20*
	p	0,02	0,02	0,19	0,03
<b>Professional Seniority</b>	r	-0,28*	-0,25*	-0,17	-0,26*
	p	0,01	0,01	0,08	0,01

\*\*Spearman correlation test was applied. \*Significant difference at 0.05 level

The correlation analysis showed that, age and Professional seniority correlated negatively with avoidance, intrusion and total STS scores of participants.

The arousal score was not correlated with either age or Professional seniority.

### 7.1. Discussion

In this study, the relationship between the demographic characteristics of lawyers working in the field of immigration and the secondary traumatic stress levels they experienced is examined. In this direction, the study was carried out with 114 lawyers working in different provinces and institutions. In the current study, 23 people seem to be above the traumatic stress sub-dimensions' cut-off scores. In other words, 23 people out of 114 show secondary traumatic stress symptoms. It may also be a possibility that the individuals participating in the research could not give objective answers when answering the scale items, using their knowledge of traumatic stress or their field experience

The STS scale was examined in terms of its reliability and validity of the sample of the present study. The detailed analyses indicated that the scale is reliable and a valid instrument to assess the secondary stress levels of Turkish lawyers. First, the examination of secondary stress levels of the participants indicated that gender and marital status are two demographic variables that differentiate the participants. It has been determined that



there is a significant difference between the scores of the lawyers in the avoidance, arousal, and intrusion sub-dimensions of the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale according to their gender. It can be concluded that female lawyers had higher Avoidance levels than males. It was determined that arousal levels were not at different levels according to gender. It can be stated that the Arousal levels of male and female participants are similar. Also, general STS levels of female participants were higher than that of males. Looking at the studies in the literature, it was seen that female participants had higher scores on pre-traumatic risk factors, gender specific (Brewin, Andrews, & Valentine, 2000). Considering the gender variability, it is thought that this difference may be due to the fact that the perception of social support from the society or family may differ between men and women. In particular, working in more challenging conditions in the field due to the gender of professional female employees may make it easier for them to be more affected by traumatic situations. Secondly, it can be stated that the Avoidance, Intrusion, Arousal and general STS levels of the participants aged 24-28, 29-33 and over 34 were similar. While the literature studies were examined Secondary Traumatic Stress Level is seen in all age groups, it is more common in young adults (Aker, 2000). The most important reason for this situation is stated as that young professionals working with trauma are less experienced and therefore unable to develop and use coping mechanisms that can be learned over time (Bride, Secondary Traumatic Stress, 2012). While examining the literature, seniority was found to be a moderating factor in the association between cognitive flexibility and stress coping flexibility (Kruczek, Basinska, & Janicka, 2020).

As the professional experience of individuals working in the field of migration increases, they are considered to be in the low risk group for developing secondary traumatic stress and showing its symptoms (Bride, Secondary Traumatic Stress, 2012). Thirdly, avoidance levels of single participants were higher than those of married participants. In addition to that the intrusion levels of the single participants were higher than the married ones. Also, arousal levels of the single participants were higher than the married ones. It was determined that the reason for the difference was due to the fact that the general STS levels of the single participants were higher

than those of the married participants. The high scores of single people can be explained by the fact that spouses are deprived of the social support they provide to each other. People need to communicate and share in order to relax psychologically. It can be said that married participants are stronger in this respect. In addition, it can be stated that the avoidance, intrusion, arousal and general STS levels of the participants who have undergraduate and graduate education are similar. It can be stated that the avoidance, intrusion, arousal and general STS levels of the participants in the study who had or did not have to listen to a traumatic experience were similar.

In the study, it can be stated that the avoidance, intrusion, arousal and general STS levels of the participants with a professional seniority level of less than 9 years are higher than the participants with a seniority of 10 years or more. The increase in the professional seniority of the participants would significantly decrease the avoidance, intrusion, arousal and general STS levels. The effects of trauma may occur differently in individuals according to different demographic characteristics. Coping with stressful situations and trauma may differ in people according to gender. Women report much higher levels of psychological and physical stress than men, according to stress studies employing clinically approved survey questionnaires (Ermasova, Ermasova, & Rekhter, 2020). Although both men and women have a physiological experience of fight or flight, Taylor et al.(2000) suggested a sex difference in the behavioural reaction to stress; women are more likely to have a behavioural experience of “tend and befriend.” (Taylor et al., 2000).

When the STS scores are examined, it can be said that the most significant difference occurs in the gender variable. It is seen that female participants have higher secondary traumatic stress scores than male participants. According to these results, it can be said that female participants experience the symptoms such as remembering traumatic events over and over, having dreams about the event, feeling like they are living again, and similar symptoms. It has been revealed that different occupational groups experience emotional difficulties during different studies, but the rate of women experiencing emotional difficulties is higher than men. The research from Turgut (2014) research on the mental problems of profes-

sionals working with migrants, stated that being a woman is a risk factor for secondary traumatic stress symptoms (Turgut, 2014). Considering the gender differences, it can be said that the situations that can give positive concepts such as self-esteem, awareness are less in women. Likewise, it can be said that female employees in their fields of duty and responsibility have more difficulty in reaching social support mechanisms than men due to gender differences, which can be said to be one of the reasons for this difference. This study can be repeated by increasing the number of participants in order to find the significance level of the differences in other demographic characteristics stronger.

In addition to stating social support as a factor that reduces the symptoms of post-traumatic stress (Brewin, Andrews, & Valentine, 2000), it is seen that social support is considered as a protective factor in PTSD symptoms. It is thought that the social support perceptions of the participants in the study are strong and their coping mechanisms are high even if they are experiencing STS. However, the work of Stephens et al. (1997) shows that support from coworkers and supervisors is associated with PTSD symptoms. In this context, the relationship between social support perception and multidimensional support perception and STS should be examined further in the future stages of the current study.

First of all, when it is considered that secondary traumatic stress causes negativities in both private and business life of the professional, as well as providing information about the necessary information and methods to protect professionals on a personal level; The struggle is also carried out at the institutional level. For this reason, it may be more usual for people other than 23 to receive support not only from their individual support but also from their corporate identity in STS situations. It is thought that the supervision support that can be obtained from the institution can strengthen the coping mechanisms of the individual. It is thought that it is important to plan studies that will reduce the indirect effects of trauma, to share the work and case load, to support in-service training of professional staff, and to increase social support mechanisms. As another factor, secondary traumatic stress symptoms experienced by the participants due to their indirect exposure to traumatic events occur as acute symptoms that

heal in a short time, and 23 people out of 114 show symptoms. In other words, the symptoms experienced by people are not as a traumatic process, but are psychological states that occur instantly and can pass spontaneously (Figley, 1995).

It can be concluded that the relationship between secondary traumatic stress and demographic variables do not differ clearly from each other in terms of changes. Variables that do not reveal a significant difference are thought to be a protective factor on individuals and have indirect effects rather than direct effects. The limited number of samples used in the study limits the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the use of self-report scales in the study limits the reliability that participants' real lives can be accurately measured in relation to the evaluated areas.

According to the results of the study and the observations in the field, it is thought that social support is an important component that affects all areas of life for all participants, and that lawyers can be more functional in both their private and professional lives and cope with secondary traumatic stress more easily as a result of being supported in this respect. It is clear that secondary traumatic stress negatively affects occupational groups working with trauma victims in terms of both social life and professional efficiency. Considering the devastating effects of trauma, it is very important to take the necessary precautions at the micro and macro level for the health of both individuals and the society we live in. The destructive effects of secondary traumatic stress can be minimized not only with individual measures, but also with the support provided by institutions and organizations to their employees as well as the support provided by state administrators.

## **7.2. Limitations and Suggestions**

In the literature, studies in the field of secondary traumatic stress mostly include professional staff such as psychologists and social workers. However, when we look at the trauma and migration field, lawyers frequently work both in the field and in the administrative units of the projects. They are exposed to many traumatic situations both in interviews with individuals in the field and in other steps taken in the field of migration. For this

reason, it is thought that this study will be useful in explaining the level of secondary traumatic stress experienced by lawyers and in taking necessary precautions. The result of this study reveals the effect of secondary traumatic stress on individuals in the light of demographic variables. For this reason, the establishment of a unit that can provide psychological support to all national and international organizations working in the field of migration, in the field and in the administrative unit, is of great importance in terms of supporting people. The value given to privacy as well as the open way to access this unit will make it easier for people to receive psychological support. It should be noted that trauma is a very broad field of study. Migration studies, on the other hand, are at the focal point of the trauma field. It is known that not only the traumas experienced by the immigrants, but also the people working in the field of humanitarian aid are both psychologically and physically affected by this process. It is an inevitable fact that the phenomenon of migration is a current issue all over the world and the number of forcibly displaced people is increasing day by day. It is thought that the establishment of a sustainable system by all countries, together with the increasing migration mobility, can both facilitate the work of states politically and that the staff deficit will be at a minimum level by supporting the people working in this field.

Secondary traumatic stress is a concept that can affect people's living standards and productivity. For this reason, studies to increase psychological resilience should be carried out. Training on traumatic stress symptoms such as acute stress disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder can be provided, so that employees can build awareness about their own possible trauma reactions. In institutions and organizations working in the field of migration, issues such as effective communication and coping strategies trainings can be offered and individual and group psychological support can be provided by professionals such as psychologists, psychological counselors, social workers. Individuals' self-expression after a stressful situation in the field, plays an important role in protecting mental health. The outcomes of this study will benefit such meetings.

It is envisaged that outputs of this study will be used as an auxiliary manual in the work and functioning of many different actors such as

non-governmental organizations working in the field of migration, relevant state institutions and organizations, international organizations. The results and outputs of the study can be used to control the mental health of the employees in policy and capacity building units in institutions and organizations and to make the necessary interventions. It should not be forgotten that the phenomenon of migration is becoming a subject that is always changing and is the common denominator of all countries of the world with each passing day. It is thought that the legal rules in the national systems of the countries can be renewed in line with the studies in the literature.

It is foreseen that this study will shed light on the regulations made on not only the issues of security such as border management and migrant smuggling, but also the protection of the rights of the professionals working in this field and the improvement of the conditions. Finally, there are many different guides and guidelines for psychologists and social workers working with migrant in the field. It is thought that this study will make a positive contribution to these activities, especially if activities such as preparing psychological guides for lawyers working in bar associations and in the field are carried out.

I think that the findings obtained are related to the situations I observed in the field. First of all, as an individual working with lawyers in the field, I think that their workforce and the secondary traumatic stress they are exposed to are quite high, and a service in the field where they can find support is not very accessible. I have observed that primarily female employees are vulnerable to more traumatic situations than male employees are. I think this is related to many different reasons. One of these situations is the perception of gender. Since women can be called more fragile and more sensitive in the society they live in, secondary traumatic stress phenomenon may occurred more quickly.

For this reason, I think that this issue should be taken into account in possible studies that can be done. Another issue is the marital status of the working people. When I met with lawyers while I was working in the field, I observed that single people were more exposed to secondary traumatic stress. I believe that the most important reason for this is the perception of social support.

I have observed that the people that single lawyers can talk to right after the traumatic events they have been exposed to are less accessible than married people are. For this reason, Married people had lower depression, anxiety, and stress levels than those that were single, separated, or widowed (Le & et al., 2020). In addition, I think that single lawyers are more likely to take part in different cases such as deportation proceedings and overseas assignments than married people are, and therefore, they are exposed to situations that are more traumatic.

In conclusion, migration has become a phenomenon that grows day by day and concerns the whole world. The phenomenon of migration with all its details covering humanitarian aid, border security, legal processes and international migration management is a subject that needs to be studied more. I think that all the studies, including this study, will make a valuable contribution to interdisciplinary issues such as policy development, monitoring & evaluation, and revision of laws at national and multicultural dimensions.

Among the limitations of the study, considering the gender of the participants, it is seen that males are more common. Future studies can be done to eliminate this difference. The number of people participating in the study can be considered as another limitation. A larger-scale research with more participants can contribute to the literature. In addition, it should be evaluated in particular whether the participants have an immigrant profile. The traumatizations that immigrant participants may experience directly may affect the answers given in the study in a positive or negative way. As can be seen, it can be clearly concluded that secondary traumatic stress differs in terms of demographic variables of individuals. The limited number of participants is another limitation of the study. In future studies, it would be beneficial to use larger sample groups and to consider other occupational groups that are frequently encountered with trauma victims.

The innovations made in the bar associations for immigrants can be examined carefully in order to expand this study later on, and the participants can be selected more specifically. The limited number of assisting lawyers that can be reached has made it difficult to compare and analyze

them in terms of study variables. Studies with larger samples will enable a more detailed examination of lawyers working with immigrants in terms of comparing the level of exposure to the traumatic experiences they are exposed to due to their profession. A comparison study to be conducted with other occupational groups that their work involve supporting traumatized people and that are not included in this study may show a different factor structure.

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